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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

Memorandum



THE GROWTH OF CHINESE INFLUENCE
IN THE
WORLD COMMUNIST MOVEMENT

8 May 1963

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

MEMORANDUM: The Growth of Chinese influence in the
World Communist Movement.

1. Although the group which Communist China now leads is still a distinct minority in the international Communist movement, the Chinese party has taken long strides out of a position where it once stood its ground alone. Since the time of the first significant open Chinese challenge to Soviet policies, roughly the beginning of 1959, the Chinese have gathered increasing strength in the movement. Each turn of the dispute has brought them new supporters, either whole parties or significant portions of other parties. Each new attempt by Khrushchev to force the Chinese into isolation has alienated more Communist leaders and more of the rank and file, either by the abrupt unilateral methods he has used or by forcing them to make a choice--a choice which was not always to Khrushchev's liking.

2. The meeting of international Communist leaders held in Moscow in late 1960 demonstrated the difficulties which face Khrushchev in his attempts to contain the challenge of intransigent Chinese views. After three weeks of hard bargaining, including persistent attempts by the Khrushchev faction to browbeat the Chinese and others into acceptance of its way of looking at the world, the statement which closed this round of the struggle was one which could be used by either side to support its own views. The document was more than something that the Chinese "could live with." It was one which they could use to good advantage in the future.

3. Up to 1960 the Chinese appear to have had limited aims with regard to the international Communist movement. They hoped to gain enough support for their views to influence the foreign policies of the Soviet Union, policies which they regarded

as inimical to their own interests. They believed that the Communist world should have a leader who establishes overall policy, but who does so in consultation with the other important members of the Communist camp. They looked to the Soviet Union to be that leader and visualized for themselves a role as principal adviser and co-formulator of policies.

4. Since 1960, the Chinese have gradually given up any hope that they could influence the policies of the Soviet Union and thus the direction the international Communist movement takes, without themselves taking on the mantle of leadership. They are therefore now engaged in a deep and unremitting contest for doctrinal leadership--a conflict which they expect will be a long and drawn-out battle whose present may appear uncertain but whose future is assured. This is the rationale behind their insistence that they are only "temporarily a minority" as Lenin was only temporarily a minority in the Second International. The successes they have scored in the past four years in gaining adherents to their doctrinal programs must serve to strengthen their resolve while at the same time it creates new disquietude in Moscow. This success is examined briefly on a regional basis below.

The Asian Parties:

5. The Chinese have made their greatest inroad into formerly Soviet-influenced areas in Asia. Part of their appeal is a racial one; despite their profession of doctrinal purity, they are not above using racist propaganda in their search for supporters. The support given by the New Zealand Communist Party, however, demonstrates that Peiping's appeal can transcend racial lines. Today the Chinese can be considered as the leaders of a regional Communist sector embracing all the important parties of Southeast Asia. From India eastward, only the Australian and Indian parties are committed to the Soviet camp.

6. The two most important parties in the area are those now in power--the North Korean and the North Vietnamese parties. The North Korean

party is now clearly and deeply committed to Peiping. In the early days of the dispute, the North Koreans attempted to maintain an uneasy neutralism. Although attracted to the Chinese views on a number of issues either because of geographic and racial affinities or joint opposition to a common enemy--the US--the North Koreans were still tied to the Soviets through residual psychological pressures and economic and military aid programs. As the opposing positions hardened, however, it was less and less possible for the Korean leadership to avoid a choice, and the choice they have made is to support Peiping. Soviet recognition of this has been apparent in the treatment accorded a North Korean military delegation to Moscow last fall and subsequent developments which suggest the Soviet Union is applying economic pressure through a refusal to supply new military aid.

7. The North Vietnamese party also moved carefully through the beginning months of the Sino-Soviet dispute in an attempt to maintain a delicate balance between the two major parties. More wary than the North Koreans of exchanging Soviet patronage for Chinese direction, and more adroit at picking a path down the middle, the North Vietnamese have continued throughout the dispute to display a cautious neutralism. Recently, however, particularly in the last two months, Vietnamese pronouncements have taken on a distinct Chinese cast and have been prominently reprinted by the Chinese. The speech by First Secretary Le Duan on 13 March, a recent Nhan Dan editorial, and the resolutions of a recently held Central Committee meeting all suggest that the North Vietnamese may be preparing to jump off their tightrope onto the Chinese side. It is still too early to tell, however, and the Vietnamese may well balance these statements with more pro-Soviet ones as they have in the past. On Balance, nevertheless, it appears most likely that if the necessity for choice is made stark enough--through the formation of two distinct internationals, for example--the Vietnamese will finally join with the Chinese.

8. The Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) is the largest in the non-Communist world and as such represents an important prize for each side.

Before the 22nd Soviet Party Congress in late 1961, the leadership of the party, represented mostly by its General Secretary Aidit, had been able to fight off the sentiment of the majority of the rank and file and of a number of politburo members, and had avoided giving clear support to Chinese views. With Khrushchev's unilateral attack on Albania, however, and his quickening rapprochement with Yugoslavia, the pro-Peiping majority acquired better weapons with which to impose its views. Aidit, in what appears to be a maneuver to maintain his leadership rather than a conversion, has now bowed to the pro-Chinese majority and the PKI has taken up a position contrary to Moscow's on the issues of Albania, Yugoslavia, the Sino-Indian border dispute, the Cuban crisis, and the necessity for an international Communist meeting. On domestic affairs, however, the PKI continues to use tactics with which the Soviet Union agrees. Despite the generalized Chinese demands for more revolutionary militancy, there is no indication that the realistic Chinese do not also agree with the PKI's moderate domestic tactics.

9. The Japanese Communist Party likes to present itself as neutral in the dispute between the USSR and China and for some years was able to suppress discussion within the party and to avoid a clear choice in public pronouncements. Within the last year, however, while still giving the impression that it wishes there were no dispute to add to its own problems, it has swung into the Peiping camp. It has republished Chinese attacks on Nehru, endorsed the Chinese border claims, published Mao's collected works, reprinted Chinese speeches, refused to attack Albania, given no support for the Soviet handling of the Cuban crisis, refused to carry in the Japanese edition of the World Marxist Review articles attacking the Chinese point of view, and attacked Yugoslav "revisionism." One of the reasons for the leadership's pose of "neutralism" is the existence within the party of a strong undercurrent of pro-Soviet thought among a significant number of the rank and file. Defections from the party have occurred recently, with its stand on the Chinese side cited as the reason. The leadership, therefore, is moving slowly and seeks to present itself as a possible mediator of the dispute. The

evidence suggests, however, that as a mediator it would attempt to settle the dispute in Peiping's favor.

10. The Indian Communist Party is another deeply divided party, but in this case the majority of the present leadership are moderate nationalists, who have condemned the Chinese attitudes and support the Soviet Union. The party, however, has a strong minority whose leftist sectarian views are completely in line with those of Peiping. At the moment, many of this faction are still in Indian jails, put there by Nehru for opposing the government's line on the border issue. They will be out some day, however, and the prospect is that they will create a great deal of difficulty for the present leadership if it maintains its present course. If they cannot move the party in the direction they wish, they may possibly move out of the party and form another which, within India, will mirror the Chinese.

11. The Australian party reflects the shifting nature of alliances and demonstrates that all changes of one view for another have not been in Peiping's favor. The leadership of the party, like that of the neighboring New Zealand party, was strongly pro-Chinese until late 1961. Since then, the dominant sentiment shifted to the Soviet side, while the New Zealand leadership has more firmly supported the Chinese. In February 1962, an internal struggle over the Sino-Soviet question was resolved in the Australian party in favor of the USSR and led to the resignation of the leader of the pro-Peiping faction. The Soviet Union can count the outcome of the factional struggle in the Australian party as its only success in Southeast Asia.

Africa and the Middle East:

12. All important parties in the Arab world are firmly pro-Soviet. The Black African Communist parties are as yet weak and they play little role in the international movement. Such parties as there are appear to be Soviet motivated, but there is significant sentiment for Chinese views among left-wing radicals in Africa. The predominance

of Chinese influence in the Afro-Asian Peoples Solidarity Organization (AAPSO), for example, reflects this sentiment.

13. Beginning about eight months ago, votes taken in the secretariat of AAPSO suggested that Chinese views had gained ground in this body, and the direction taken by AAPSO's third conference in Tanganyika in February 1963 indicated that they now dominate it. This was driven home last week when Soviet supporters at the Afro-Asian Journalists Conference were blocked by the Indonesian chairman in an attempt to seat the USSR as a working member rather than an observer.

14. In Latin America, the majority of the Communist parties are overtly in the Soviet camp. Although the leadership remains pro-Soviet, however, there are clear-cut splits rising out of the rank and file almost everywhere--splits between the cautious and the impetuous, between those in control and their younger critics. These divisions, rooted in local intra-party strife, have been widened by the Sino-Soviet dispute. Even the leadership of the various parties are not identical in their backing of Moscow. Support varies from very strong in Guatemala, Columbia, Chile, Bolivia, Argentina, and others, to more luke-warm in Ecuador, Venezuela, Uruguay, Honduras, and Haiti. And finally there are special cases, like that of the Brazilian party. Here the leadership of the official and more traditional Communist party is firmly pro-Soviet, but it must tread carefully because of the existence of a dissident Communist party whose policies of leftist revolution are close to the Peiping line.

15. In Mexico, the Communist party (PCM) has split over the Sino-Soviet question. In February 1963, the Chinese Communist trade delegation then visiting Mexico reportedly offered financial aid to the party in exchange for PCM support of Peiping's policies. Since then, internal wrangling has continued within the PCM and the differences do not appear near reconciliation. In fact, the recent postponement of the 14th Extraordinary Party Congress from July to October appears to reflect a concern on the part of the party leadership that a congress held now might break down over

the Sino-Soviet issue. In addition, as is occurring in many countries in Latin America, a Communist splinter group in Mexico consistently maintains a more militant outlook than the official PCM and is probably being supported from Peiping. Recent developments indicate that the controversy over the Sino-Soviet dispute within the Mexican Communist movement is probably growing more bitter rather than ameliorating.

16. Cuba has always been a enigma in the Sino-Soviet dispute. Within the Cuban regime there are a number of important figures who view the world much as the Chinese view it. Nevertheless, Cuba is heavily dependent on the Soviet Union for economic and political support. It suffered a serious blow to its pride in October, however, and therefore has a stake in attempting to appear independent of the Soviet Union. The result has been a distinct shift in the nature of Cuban discussions of the dispute within the Communist world. The flavor of Cuban leaders' speeches after the missile crisis--although couched in what appears to be neutral language--was deliberately favorable to the Chinese. A reflection of the Soviet concern over this situation can be seen in Castro's present visit to the USSR. The Soviet leaders are clearly hoping to use this visit not only to emphasize their determination to protect Cuba against US pressures but to strengthen their position with Castro within the context of the Sino-Soviet dispute.

Europe:

17. Within the Western European Communist parties, as well as within the North American parties, Moscow's writ generally continues to run. There is pro-Chinese sentiment among some of the rank and file of most of the parties, most markedly, in the British and Belgian parties, but the leadership of the Western European parties still fully supports Moscow in its dispute with the Chinese. The Sino-Soviet dispute, however, has another effect here, which, while not disposing these parties to Chinese influence, yet stores up future difficulties for the Soviet Union. For, against the background of schism in the international Communist movement and a concomitant

weakening of Soviet authority, an opportunity has arisen for various parties to assert their national individuality if they wish. In addition, Moscow's willingness to accept divergencies along the "road to socialism" in order to envelop Yugoslavia in a more loosely structured bloc allows strong parties elsewhere to oppose Soviet insistence that what is good for Moscow is also good for them.

18. The Italian party is the best example of the early development of this tendency to disregard Moscow on occasion, while yet supporting the Soviet party fully in the dispute with China. On the question of the Common Market, the Italian party has developed an approach which fits its needs better than the outright Soviet rejection. The Italian theory of "structural reform" is another deviation to fit the Italian scene; in absolute terms, it is far more revisionist a doctrine than anything the Yugoslavs are doing. The Soviet Union is willing to permit this type of experimentation within the national parties, if these parties will fully support Soviet foreign policy aims and tactics. As the national parties become more and more accustomed to forming their own ideas on some policies, however, Soviet control is bound to become weaker and the structure of the Communist world increasingly loose.

19. This willingness to defy Moscow on vital issues of national interest while yet supporting Soviet foreign policy guides and an anti-Chinese line is not restricted to Communist parties outside the bloc. Rumania has recently stood up for its own economic development plans in the face of an attempt by the Soviet Union to promote joint planning through CEMA. The Rumanian refusal to go along with CEMA plans was indicated in its Central Committee resolutions of early March. China, although realizing that Rumania is far from ready to give it overt support, nevertheless has reprinted these resolutions in its party press, probably as an indication to the Rumanians that it stands ready to aid them if desired. Rumania has also expressed its dissatisfaction with the Soviet Union's policies by returning its ambassador to Albania and is the only satellite regime to raise the level of its trade with China this year. Although we cannot expect Rumania soon to shift its allegiance from

Moscow to Peiping, it is the existence of the Sino-Soviet dispute that allows room for regimes such as the Rumanian to exercise independent judgment in the face of Soviet disapproval.

The Outlook:

20. Since this memorandum has concentrated on the gains which the Chinese have made in the international Communist movement, it has presented a somewhat distorted picture. The Soviet Union still commands the support of the large majority of the movement. Only in Asia have the Chinese made significant inroads and developed a position of influence which could be translated into a following willing to form a new international. In other areas, the Chinese can boast of sentiment in their favor, of minority factions in other-oriented Communist parties, and of future prospects. In addition, we do not know of any organizational ties that have developed between China and the parties now supporting her. China's appeal is based on its interpretation of the basic doctrine; at some future date those parties now supporting this interpretation might shift to a position of greater independence of both major centers or even back to the Soviet Union.

21. On balance, however, Khrushchev must be deeply concerned by the attraction of so many parties to the Chinese positions. The development of new Communist parties is only likely in underdeveloped areas where Chinese influence is now greatest, and the result will probably therefore be more Chinese-oriented parties. In those areas where Soviet influence is greatest, the trend appears to be toward the assertion of ever more independence of view and action. It is with good reason that Khrushchev and his colleagues appear today more concerned with the problems within the Communist world than with any other single issue.